



**U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement**

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News Release

ICE AGENTS ARREST 42 ILLEGAL ALIENS AT SECURE FACILITIES IN NEW MEXICO AND LOUISIANA

Illegal aliens worked for sub-contractors at Kirtland AFB and New Orleans International Airport

WASHINGTON, D.C. — U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) special agents yesterday carried out two separate enforcement actions resulting in the arrest of 42 aliens who were illegally working at a military base in New Mexico and at the international airport in Louisiana.

In the New Mexico operation, ICE special agents teamed up with the Air Force Office of Special Investigation (OSI) and base Military Police to arrest 22 Mexican nationals who were illegally working for one of six subcontractors on a housing project at Kirtland Air Force Base in Albuquerque, N.M. The individuals were arrested following a document check at the military installation.

ICE first began checking documents at Kirtland AFB after receiving information from OSI and the U.S. Border Patrol about illegal aliens who were recently arrested trying to enter the Department of Defense and the Department of Energy installation.

One of the aliens, an aggravated felon previously convicted of false imprisonment, has been placed in formal deportation proceedings. The rest are being processed for removal, and will be voluntarily returned to Mexico today.

“Removing illegal aliens from sensitive worksites is a top priority for ICE,” said Kyle Hutchins, special agent-in-charge of the ICE El Paso Office of Investigations. “By removing unauthorized workers from critical infrastructure sites, such as U.S. military installations, we’re shutting down significant vulnerabilities and potential threats to the security of our homeland.”

In Louisiana, ICE special agents yesterday arrested 20 illegal aliens who were unlawfully employed by a local company in Kenner, La. The company reportedly provided workers to several critical infrastructure facilities in the greater New Orleans area, including New Orleans International Airport and the Veterans Administration Hospital.

The Louisiana arrests were part of an ongoing local operation that has netted more than 50 illegal aliens in recent months. Five of the six criminal aliens in custody from the previous arrests are now being prosecuted by the U.S. Attorney's office for the Eastern District of Louisiana on charges of re-entry after deportation and document fraud; the sixth criminal alien is being prosecuted by the U.S. Attorney's office for the Middle District of Louisiana on charges of false claim to U.S. citizenship. Of those arrested yesterday, all are in ICE custody and have been placed in removal proceedings.

"Those businesses who knowingly hire illegal aliens and allow them to be placed in areas that are critically important to this country will face significant criminal and administrative charges" said Michael A. Holt, special agent-in-charge for the ICE New Orleans office. "We continue to work diligently to restore the integrity to the immigration system to keep our workplaces safe."

Yesterday's arrests are the latest in ICE's ongoing efforts to target and remove illegal aliens working at sensitive sites and critical infrastructure locations around the nation, including defense facilities, nuclear plants, chemical plants, airports and seaports. In accordance with ICE's homeland security mission, ICE special agents prioritize worksite enforcement efforts by focusing on investigations related to critical infrastructure and national security.

Just last month, ICE special agents teamed up with the White Sands Missile Range Police Department to arrest an illegal alien trying to enter the White Sands Missile Range in New Mexico to perform contract work inside the facility. ICE agents processed the individual and placed him into deportation proceedings. Police officials at the facility first sought help from ICE two months ago after intercepting 12 illegal aliens with fake documents who were attempting to enter the facility to work at a construction site. The ICE investigation is continuing.

Some other recent cases include the following:

- On Nov. 30, ICE agents screened the identification of more than 450 contractors and sub-contractors working at the Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base-New Orleans in Belle Chasse, La. ICE agents detained six illegal aliens today performing contract work at the base. The Naval Air Station had previously conducted its own investigation and formally barred more than a dozen workers from the facility. The facility later requested the assistance of ICE to further investigate employees working for contractors there. Last Thursday, ICE agents and base security intercepted 10 illegal aliens attempting to enter the Navy facility. The ICE investigation into the hiring practices of companies performing contract work at the Bell Chasse facility is ongoing.
- On Wednesday, ICE agents took custody of six illegal aliens attempting to enter Fort Irwin, a U.S. Army desert warfare training facility in California, to perform contract work there. Base security had requested the assistance of ICE after questioning the validity of the documents presented by the illegal aliens as they attempted to enter the base for employment. ICE agents have placed the aliens into removal proceedings. The ICE investigation is continuing.

- Also on Wednesday, ICE agents took custody of an illegal alien attempting to enter the Marine Corps Logistics Base in Barstow, Calif., to perform contract work there. Security officials at the base intercepted the individual after he allegedly presented a fraudulent driver's license and social security card to officials. The alien was arriving for his first day of work at the base on behalf on a contract company. The ICE investigation is continuing.
- On Oct. 5, ICE arrested three illegal aliens who served as language instructors at the U.S. Army Special Operations Command at Fort Bragg, N.C. Two were criminally charged with using false documents to gain employment and making false statements. The third was charged with being in the country illegally. The employees provided instruction to U.S. Special Forces.
- On Oct. 4, seven illegal aliens were arrested at the U.S. Air Force Base in Mountain Home, Idaho, following an investigation by ICE and the Air Force Office of Special Investigations. The men were working for Nutek Construction, which was sub-contracted to build housing on the air base.
- On Aug. 26, ICE agents arrested six Mexican nationals at the U.S. Army's Fort Irwin in Barstow, Calif. The men were working illegally for Laurence-Hovenier Inc., a construction company building military housing at the base. The workers, most of whom had security badges authorizing them to enter the base, were identified after agents audited the hiring records of more than 700 Laurence-Hovenier workers. The audit found that more than 40 percent of the employees on the company's payroll might not have been authorized to work in the U.S. The investigation continues.
- On July 26, ICE agents arrested six illegal aliens working at the Homestead Air Reserve Base in Homestead, Fla. The men, who were contracted by a Texas-based corporation, were working on a major runway-resurfacing project. Officers working at the Air Reserve's main gate noticed irregularities in the documents presented by the three men and called ICE for follow-up.

#ICE#

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of four integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.